DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 165 AC 006 158

AUTHOR	Harp, John; Cummings, Gordon J.
TITLE	Discussion Groups and Public Affairs Education; An Analysis of Group Survival.
INSTITUTION	State Univ. of New York, Ithaca. Coll. of Agriculture at Cornell.
REPORT NO	BULL-70
PUB DATE	Jan 68
NOTE	60p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC-$3.10
DESCRIPTORS	Age Differences, *Analysis of Variance, Attitudes, Community Size, *Discussion Groups, Educational Background, Females, Group Structure, Males, Occupations, *Participant Characteristics, *Persistence, *Public Affairs Education, Research, Residential Patterns, Rural Areas, Urban Areas

ABSTRACT

This study in upstate New York investigated certain characteristics of 602 public affairs education discussion groups; relative group stability in terms of change in size over time; whether characteristics affect group survival; and how group structure is related to certain attitudes on individualism and community growth. Data were gathered by questionnaire (about a 50% response) on community size, residence, age, sex, educational level, occupations, group size, and number of communities represented in each group. Members (52.5% men and 47.5% women) were largely farmers, housewives, or professionals, aged 25-65, high school graduates or beyond, and residents of population centers and of urban or transitional counties. Single community representation was dominant (60%), especially in rural areas (63%). Most groups were relatively heterogeneous, but on a consistent basis. Those with eight to eleven members more often stayed the same size than larger or smaller groups. Ages under 35, postgraduate education, and professional, technical, or related employment were related to group survival; ages 36-55 were positively related. Farm residence negatively affected attitudes toward community economic growth. Education, residence, and occupation affected perceived dependence on the future of one's community. (ly)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 1968

BULLETIN 70

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED034165

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF GROUP SURVIVAL

by
JOHN HARP
and
GORDON J. CUMMINGS

AC000158

Department of Rural Sociology
Cornell University Agriculture Experiment Station
New York State College of Agriculture
A Statutory College of the State University
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

ED034165

Acknowledgments

To express properly the authors indebtedness to the many people who assisted with the project over the past few years would be a difficult task indeed. The sponsors of the project, the New York State Cooperative Extension Service deserves special recognition for the important part they played in both financing the research and in collection of data. Through their cooperative and helpful attitude they proved that researcher and practitioner can share mutual goals.

We also wish to thank the several graduate students who assisted with various phases of the project. The staggering task of assembling and coding approximately 20,000 questionnaires received over a period of several weeks was ably and conscientiously executed by Diane Brown and Robert Covey. Salah Yacoub while holding an Extension Fellowship in the Department of Rural Sociology and Arnold Deutchman, graduate assistant were particularly helpful in the early phases of data analysis. Personnel from the Rand Computer Science Center at Cornell University developed and made available to the authors a cross tabs program thereby facilitating data analysis.

Finally we acknowledge all those civic minded participants who completed the questionnaires for each of the discussion periods. We trust that the results of the present study will be of practical usefulness in the hands of all parties interested in public affairs education.

Gordon J. Cummings

John Harp

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION:

AN ANALYSIS OF GROUP SURVIVAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments. ii

Discussion Groups and Community Development. 1

General Characteristics. 3

Rural-Urban Context. 3

Occupation. 4

Sex 4

Education 6

Age 6

Residence 6

Community Representation. 6

Group Stability, Survival and Compositional Variables. . . 8

Comparative Distributions of Groups Classified on Compositional Variables 9

Group Size. 9

Representation of Communities 9

Men and Women 10

Educational Level 11

Age 11

Occupation. 12

Residence 14

Group Stability: Variations in Group Size and Compositional Characteristics

Group Size. 15

Compositional Variables 18

Group Survival and Compositional Characteristics . . .21

Number of Communities Represented 22

Men and Women 22

Levels of Education 23

Age Composition 24

Occupation 25
Residence. 26
Size 27
Group Composition and Member Attitudes
Community Growth. 31
Individualism 35
Epilogue. 39
Appendix A. 40
Appendix B. 45

List of Tables

Table

IIB-1 Numbers of Groups in Rural, Transitional and Urban Counties for all Four Discussion Periods. 5

IIB-2 Characteristics of Participants by Rural-Urban Regions 6

IIIA-1 Distributions of Groups by Size 9

IIIA-2 Distributions of Groups by Percentage of Women Members 11

IIIA-3 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (Professional, Technical and Kindred Workers. 12

IIIA-4 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (Housewives). 13

IIIA-5 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (Laborers and Service Personnel). 13

IIIA-6 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (Farmers). 14

IIIB-1 Stability of Groups over the Four Discussion Series . 16

IIIB-2 Variations in Group Size for Each Meeting Period. . . 18

IIIC-1 Group Survival by Community Representation of Members 22

IIIC-2 Group Survival by Percentage of Men and Women Members 23

IIIC-3 Group Survival by Educational Composition of Members (Post Graduate) 23

IIIC-4 Group Survival by "Young" Age Composition of Members 24

IIIC-5 Group Survival by "Middle Age" Composition of Members 25

IIIC-6 Group Survival by Occupational Composition of Members. 26

IIIC-7 Group Survival by Members' Place of Residence 27

IIIC-8 Group Survival by Membership Size 28

IVA-1 Attitude Toward Community Growth by Farm Residence. . 32

IVA-2 Attutude Toward Community Growth by Residence in Population Centers. 33

IVB-1 High School Education and Community Dependency. . . . 34

IVB-2 Post Graduate Education and Community Dependency. . . 36

IVB-3 Farming Occupation and Community Dependency 36

IVB-4 Population Center Residency and Community Dependency. 37

List of Illustrations

Figure

1 Distributions of Groups by Number of Communities Represented 9A

2 Distributions of Groups Homogeneous with Respect to Various Educational Levels. . . . . .11A (more than half of their members exhibiting this characteristic)

3 Distributions of Groups Homogeneous with Respect to Age Composition of Members. 12A

4 Distributions of Groups Homogeneous with Respect to Residence Categories. 15A

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF GROUP SURVIVAL

I. Discussion Groups and Community Development

The present study is an analysis of discussion groups organized in connection with a public affairs education program in community development during February 1964.[1] The discussion series from which the study data were obtained represent an attempt to improve the participants' understanding of selected public issues related to the future development of New York State communities. A discussion approach was used because it was believed to be more efficacious than others in achieving the program objectives. Several important functions of small groups when utilized in a community oriented study program can be identified: (1) to define or redefine community problems and their relevance to individuals, (2) to provide opportunities for developing new understanding through broadening the basis of factual knowledge and through confrontation with different points of view, and (3) to enhance citizen identification with the concerns of a community.

Sponsors of the educational program expressed interest in these questions: What are the characteristics of people attracted to discussion groups? What causes some groups to continue while others drop out of the program? Are there guidelines to help adult educators to more effectively utilize small, informal discussion groups in educational programs on community planning and development? In an attempt to answer these and related questions the present study: (1) offers a descriptive analysis of the 602 discussion groups in terms of certain compositional characteristics, (2) investigates the relative stability of groups as measured by change in membership size over time, (3) determines whether or not certain compositional characteristics affect group survival, and (4) explores the relationship between group structure and attitudes toward community growth, and community dependency.

---

1. A previous interim report provides information on the characteristics of individual participants throughout the four week discussion series. Cummings, Gordon and Harp, John, "Operaction Advance: A Report of the February 1964 Discussion Series", Mimeograph, Department of Rural Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York: 1964.

The series was sponsored by the Extension Service at Cornell University. Participants were provided with reference material containing four eight-page pamphlets -- (1) Community Growth and Development, (2) Education and the Future, (3) Resources - Land, Water, and People, and (4) Amidst World Tensions. Participants also received a one-page questionnaire for each discussion topic requesting certain information as to the characteristics of individual participants.

Data for the present analysis were obtained from self-administered questionnaires. They were completed by each participant upon termination of a given discussion period, collected by the leader, and forwarded to Cornell University for coding and analysis. Since there were four discussion periods, data were collected four times yielding 602 groups ranging in size from 2 to 31 individuals with a total of approximately 6000 participants. Estimates as to the overall rate of questionnaire response by program directors ran as high as fifty percent. As to the representativeness of the sample, questionnaires were received from groups in all 45 participating counties of the State. Two general classes of information were obtained through the above methods: (1) social characteristics of individual participants and (2) attitudinal responses to items dealing with the discussion topics covered each week.

II. Characteristics of Participants

A. General Characteristics

The public affairs education program was carried out in 80 percent of the upstate counties in New York State. For purposes of the present analysis 44 counties and 19,707 participants comprise the sample. A higher rate of participation in terms of number of groups is found in counties with 50,000 to 100,000 population and lowest for counties with populations in excess of 100,000.

Almost 1/3 or 30 percent of the participants claim farm residence while a smaller percentage of participants (5.3 percent) come from population centers of more than 25,000. Men and women are represented in almost equal numbers, 53 and 47 percent respectively. The discussion program attracted a larger percentage of housewives than any other single occupational category (39 percent) and along with the professional group they make up 60 percent of the total number of participants. Nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the participants have some college and almost 1/3 have at least high school thereby comprising the modal educational category. A majority of the discussion series participants are in the 36-55 age category (57 percent) with small percentages representing either age extremes (under 25 or over 65). Almost 2/3 (65 percent) of the participants attend all four discussion sessions.

B. Rural-Urban Context

Upon identifying the salient characteristics of participants in the series we shall explore variations that might exist when these attributes are analyzed for rural and urban counties. A classification of rural, transitional and urban counties based on both total population and population density is used.[1] The 44 counties in this particular sample are distributed as follows: 16 rural, 16 transitional and 12 urban. Table IIB-1 shows the distribution of groups

---

1. Counties classified as rural had a population of less than 50,000 and a density per square mile of less than 60. The transitional category consists of counties with a population of from 50,000 to 100,000 and a density per square miles of 60 to 150. Urban counties are those whose population exceeds 100,000 and density per square mile exceeds 150.

and individuals for each of the rural-urban categories throughout the four meeting periods. The results show a larger number of groups and participants in the rural and transitional counties compared with the urban. These findings may reflect the differential appeal of the program to various areas of the state and the variations in extension staff allocated to the task of organizing groups within counties. The weekly attrition of groups does not differ significantly when comparing rural, transitional and urban counties, namely 1.0, 1.3 and 1.1 percents respectively. Examining loss of participants for each of the typed counties one finds losses of 18.3, 22.8 and 22.3 percents for the rural, transitional and urban counties when comparing the first and fourth weeks. The differences are not significant.

Occupation:

Beginning our analysis of the 19,707 participants we examine the distribution of occupation for the rural-urban counties. The most predictable finding in Table IIB-2 shows the percentage of farmers for each of the three categories of counties. Farmers represent a higher percentage of participants in the rural than in either transitional or urban counties.

Two other salient results may be gleaned from the table and refer to the percentages of housewives and managers, proprietors and officials respectively. With respect to the former as an occupational category one finds a significantly higher percentage of housewives as participants in the urban context. Community leadership apparently continues to be a role open primarily to males in the rural as contrasted with the more urban settings. Concerning the percentage of managers, officials, proprietors it is of interest to note that although their absolute numbers would be greater in the more urban environment, they comprise a larger percentage of participants in the rural counties. For this particular occupational category in the rural counties participation in local community affairs may be defined as an integral part of their managerial role.

Sex:

One finds a larger percentage of female participants in the urban counties when compared with rural and transitional. These results may reflect the more traditional role for women in the rural when compared with the urban context.

Table IIB-1 Numbers of Groups and Individuals in Rural, Transitional and Urban Counties for all Four Discussion Periods

County Category	No. of counties	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Total	
		Groups	Individuals	Groups	Individuals	Groups	Individuals	Groups	Individuals		
Rural	16	206	1824	200	1778	196	1638	184	1480	786	6720
Transitional	16	245	2212	240	2177	236	1884	213	1706	934	7979
Urban	12	151	1393	152	1355	150	1178	133	1082	586	5008
Total	44	602	5429	592	5310	582	4700	530	4268	2306	19707

Education:

The distribution of participants with varying amounts of formal education is quite similar for each of the three types of counties. In all three contexts and throughout the four weeks we find a majority of the participants with 12 to 15 years of formal education. Athough median levels of education would vary for the population as a whole, within these three types of counties, the discussion series does not reflect these differences.

Age:

The percentage of participants under 35 is greater in the urban counties when compared with the rural and transitional categories. Once again relatively stable patterns are found for each of the four weeks within a given rural-urban context.

Place of Residence:

Although one would expect some relationship between place of residence of particpants and counties classified as to population size it is surprising to note that in each of the three classes of counties the modal residence pattern for participants is farm or open country. One does find however, that a much higher percentage of participants from urban counties come from places of more than 25,000 population.

Community Representation:

The single community pattern is dominant for the rural counties but less characteristic of the transitional and urban counties. The percentage of participants giving three or more communities represented within a group is almost twice as large for urban when compared with rural counties. Despite these variations the modal pattern continues to be single community representation for all three types of counties.

Table IIB-2 Characteristics of Participants by Rural-Urban Regions

Population Characteristics	Rural	Transitional	Urban	Total
Sex	%	%	%	%
Male	56.6	56.7	40.4	52.5
Female	43.5	43.3	59.6	47.5
Total	100 (6720)	100 (7979)	100 (5008)	100 (19707)
Occupation				
Housewives	35	34	53	39
Farmer	17	16	7	14
Professional	20	22	19	21
Managers	8	8	4	7
Others	20	20	17	19
Total	100(6720)	100(7979)	100(5008)	100(19707)
Age				
< 25	3	4	3	4
26-35	19	21	26	21
36-45	33	34	34	33
46-55	25	24	20	24
56-65	13	10	11	11
> 65	7	7	6	7
Total	100(6720)	100(7979)	100(5008)	100(19707)
Residence				
Farm	33	33	23	30
Open Country	24	23	33	26
Center < 25,000	40	40	25	36
Center > 25,000	0	2	16	5
Other	3	2	3	3
Total	100(6720)	100(7979)	100(5008)	100(19707)
Community Representation				
One	63	61	52	60
Two	25	27	27	26
Three or more	12	12	21	14
Total	100(6720)	100(7979)	100(5008)	100(19707)
Education				
8 or less years	3.3	2.3	2.2	2.6
9-11	11.0	8.2	8.7	9.3
12	31.4	31.1	28.5	30.5
13-15	22.2	24.5	26.3	24.2
16	13.6	14.3	15.0	14.3
17 or more	18.6	19.7	19.2	19.2
Total	100 (6720)	100 (7979)	100 (5008)	100 (19707)

III. Group Stability, Survival and Compositional Variables

The variables used in the present study to describe small groups and predict their survival over time derive from the aggregative social characteristics of individual members. They are variously referred to in the literature by such terms as personal datum and aggregative properties as contrasted with unit datum and integral properties.[1] The problem of differentiating group and individual properties is as old as Sociology, however the present authors do not wish to revive the controversy at this time. The position taken in the present case is best described by Alpert's discussion of relational realism. This is an approach to social phenomena characterized by a realism that refuses in his words "to accord transcendent reality to the whole as against the parts, and conceives society as being in the members, rather than over and above them."[2] Given the nature of the available data the analysis is necessarily one of compositional characteristics of groups and is therefore distinct from various studies of structural or compositional effects.[3] It should also be noted that the presence of group variables not derived from membership characteristics is minimal for contrived groups of this type. Fundamentally the method employed is one of statistically aggregative techniques to show compositional properties.

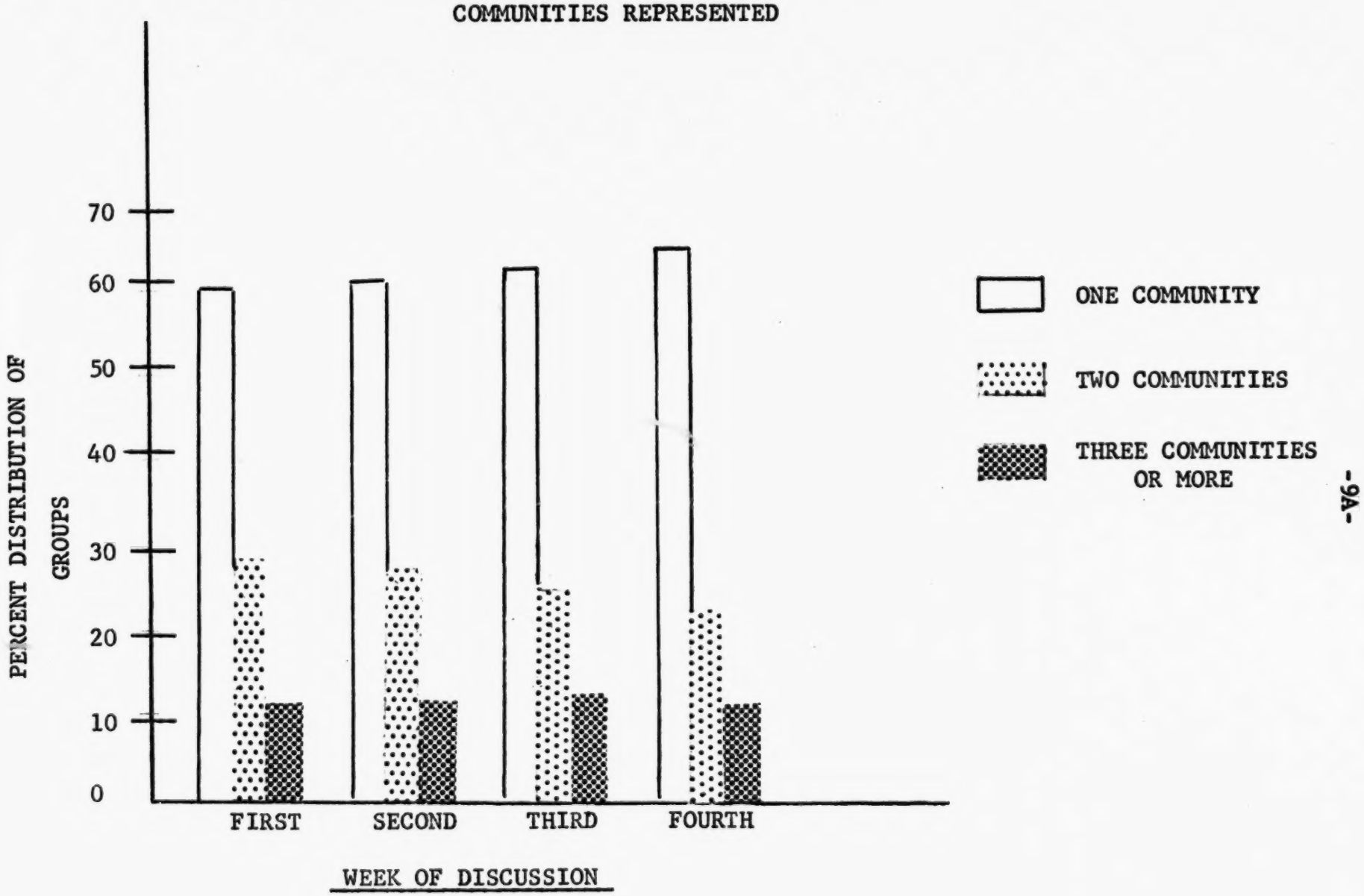
---

1 These terms are used by Lazarsfeld and Kendall, and by Selvin and Hagstrom respectively. See Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and Kendall, Patricia, "Problems in Survey Analysis", in Merton, Robert K. and Lazarsfeld, Paul F. Continuities in Social Research , Free Press, Glencoe Illinois: 1950, pp. 190-191. Selvin, Hanan C. and Hagstrom, Warren O., "The Empirical Classification of Formal Groups", Vol. 28, No. 3, American Sociological Review, pp. 399-410.

2 Alpert, Harry, Emile Durkheim and His Sociology, Russell and Russell, New York: 1961, p. 158.

3 Most representative of this category is the work of Peter Blau who provides support for our initial position when he states that there is no distinction between concepts that refer to attributes of collectivites and those which refer to attributes of individuals. See Blau, Peter, "Structural Effects", American Sociological Review, Vol. 25, No. 2, April 1960, p. 179.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF GROUPS BY NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED



A. Comparative Distributions of Groups Classified on Compositional Variables

1. Group Size

Past studies have shown that group size is correlated with the communication process and the effectiveness of discussion within the group.[1] In this study, group size is believed to contribute to the stability or permanence of discussion groups. As Table IIIA-1 shows, the weekly distribution of groups

Table IIIA-1 Distributions of Groups by Size

Discussion Week	Group Size 4 - 5 %	6 - 7 %	8 - 9 %	10 - 11 %	12 - 13 %	14+ %	Total %	Total No.
First	9	21	33	19	9	9	100	600
Second	9	21	30	21	11	8	100	579
Third	10	26	32	19	9	4	100	547
Fourth	14	27	31	17	7	4	100	512
Total	234	531	707	423	207	136	100	2238

having 8-11 members display relatively higher stability than groups having fewer or more members. Approximately one-half of the groups are composed of 8-11 members throughout the four week period. The class of groups comprised of 14 or more members tend to exhibit the least amount of stability over the entire discussion series when compared with groups of other size categories.

2. Representation of Communities

In completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to identify their "community". Presumably in most instances they gave a local place name or post office designation as their residence. In this sense we find approximately two-thirds of the groups meeting over the four week period have members from only one such community as shown in Figure 1. About one-fourth of the groups have membership drawn from two communities while about 11 percent have members

1 Davis, James A., Great Books and Small Groups, Free Press, New York: 1961, p. 103; and also Slater, Philip E., "Contrasting Correlates of Group Size", Sociometry, 21, pp 129-139, June 1958.

from three or more communities. The distribution of groups with respect to this characteristic remains relatively unchanged over the four sessions.

Given the fact that discussion groups were encouraged to organize on a local basis one seeks an explanation for the finding that over one-third of the groups are comprised of participants from two or more communities. A possible explanation is that the place designations given were considered as sub-communities of a larger community system within which the discussions took place. Another plausible explanation may be that the group convenor, encouraged as he was, to form a group with a diversity of individual backgrounds, found it necessary to go beyond his immediate locality to find people who could contribute meaningfully to the particular discussion topics. In any event, the results do suggest that in programs of this type attention may need to be given by sponsors to more directly relating the content of a particular discussion topic to the relevant socio-political community. For example, education as a topic in the present discussion would utilize school districts as existing units with identifiable boundaries, while water resource issues would obviously require a different geographical community of interest. Some of the group organizers may well have recognized the need for an enlarged concept of community to intelligently discuss some of the issues. Perhaps future public affairs discussion programs should consider designing educational materials having a multi-county or regional focus. This would constitute a large enough arena within which a range of public issues could be more realistically considered and their relevance for specific systems identified.

3. Men and Women

A high degree of stability is shown when comparing the four distributions of groups with respect to the proportion of women members. Ten percent or less of the groups are composed of only women, with a similar distribution of all male groups. As can be seen a majority of the groups are heterogeneous in terms of sex composition with those composed of from 26 to 50 percent women representing the modal category for all four sessions. Additional information from county extension agents reveals that groups comprised solely of women were previously organized home demonstration units. A higher degree of stability is

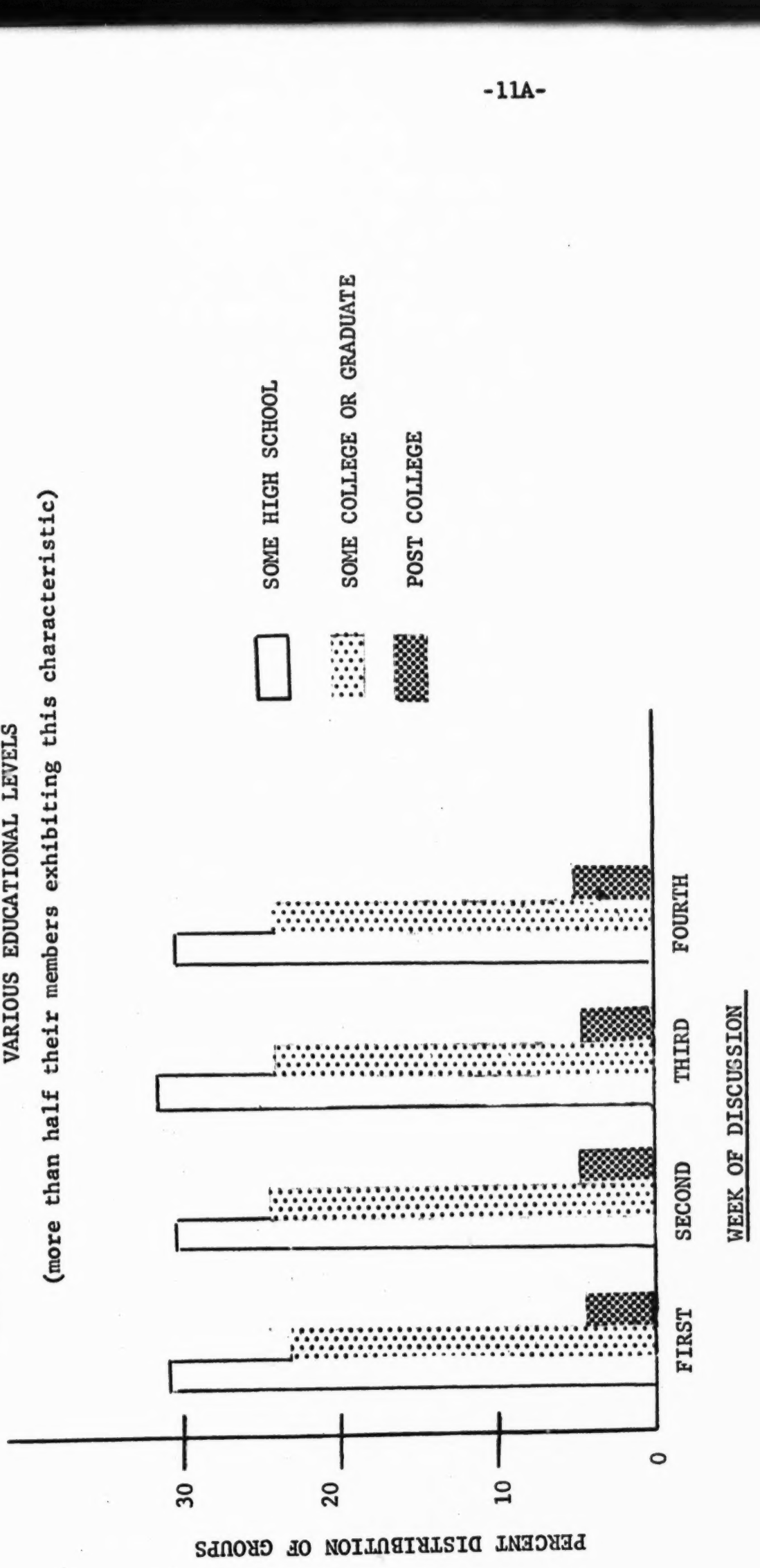


FIGURE 2: DISTRIBUTIONS OF GROUPS HOMOGENEOUS WITH RESPECT TO VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

(more than half their members exhibiting this characteristic)

Table IIIA-2 Distribution of Groups by Percentage of Women Members

Discussion Week	all men 0/0	0-25 0/0	26-50 0/0	51-75 0/0	76-99 0/0	all women 0/0	Total No.	Total 0/0
First	10	8	48	21	3	10	557	100
Second	8	10	45	23	5	9	519	100
Third	10	9	47	20	4	10	489	100
Fourth	10	9	46	22	3	10	466	100
Total No.	191	181	949	437	73	200	2031	100

expected therefore among these groups since they existed prior to initiation of the discussion program. The authors are not aware of any prior organizational history for groups made up exclusively of men. The existence of a high proportion of women in these particular public affairs discussion groups, an area of community life traditionally dominated by men, may be due in no small measure to the influence of home economics administrators and agents in influencing the field organization of this particular program.

4. Educational Level of Group Members

The weekly distributions of groups with respect to the proportion of members having some high school education is highly stable. Such stability is further displayed by distributions of groups with respect to the proportion of members having some college or beyond college educations. (See Figure 2). Participants in groups with one-half or more of their members having a post college education comprise a very small percentage of the total number of groups. Any selectivity operating within any given group was not on the basis of participants' education.

5. Age of Participants

Between 50 and 60 percent of the groups have one-half or more of their members in the 36-55 age category throughout the four week period with a definite tendency to peak on this variable in the second week. The younger age category of 35 years or under vacillates between 10 and 13 percent while the oldest category of 56 years of age or over does not reach the 10 percent level throughout

the discussion series (Figure 3). Once again, as with education, a high degree of stability is shown with respect to age over the four week period.

6. Occupations of Members

Managers, officials, and proprietors are the least represented as an occupational category of participants. They comprise a minority element (less than 25 percent) in better than ninety percent of the groups.

Although professional, technical and kindred workers comprise about 1/5 of the participants in the program, we find that more than two-thirds of the discussion groups have less than twenty-five percent of their members within this occupational category. The proportion of discussion groups that are relatively homogeneous on this characteristic is therefore extremely small as shown in Table IIIA-3.

Table IIIA-3 Distribution of Groups by Occupational Composition (Professional, Technical and Kindred Workers)

Discussion Week	Homogeneity with respect to percent in these occupations (low) 0 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 99 (high)	Total	
First	72	23	4	1	100	413
Second	69	27	3	1	100	388
Third	72	22	5	1	100	356
Fourth	72	22	5	1	100	348
Total No.	1070	351	66	18	100	1505

A high degree of consistency is shown on the weekly distributions for this occupational variable.

The distributions for the occupational category of housewife are less skewed than for the managerial occupations. (Table IIIA-4)

FIGURE 3: DISTRIBUTIONS OF GROUPS HOMOGENEOUS WITH RESPECT TO AGE COMPOSITION OF MEMBERS

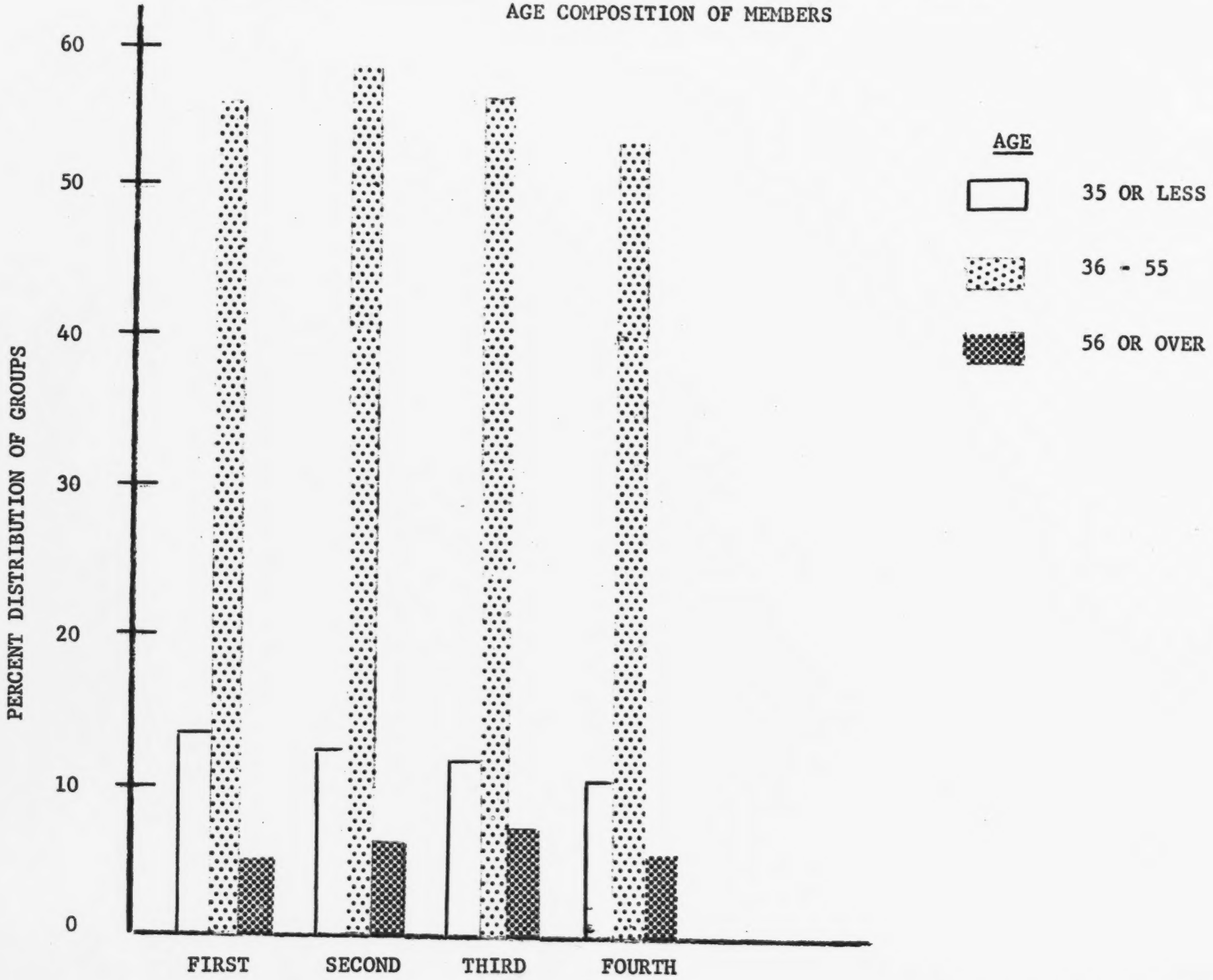


Table IIA-4 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (housewives)

Discussion Week (low)	Homogeneity with respect to percent in this occupation 0 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 99(high)	Total %	No.
First	28	50	11	11	100	413
Second	28	49	13	10	100	388
Third	30	47	13	10	100	356
Fourth	29	48	13	10	100	348
Total No.	432	731	186	156	100	1505

To be more precise, almost one-half of the groups for all four sessions have from 26 to 50 percent of their members who are housewives. A highly consistent 10 percent of the groups that are relatively homogeneous on this variable (i.e., 75-99 percent) are probably as mentioned earlier home demonstration units.

Laborers and service personnel are least represented in the discussion groups. We find that less than one-fourth of the members in 85% or more of the groups claim these occupations, while less than one percent of the groups have three-fourths to all of their members in these occupations. The program may have limited appeal for this category of participants, but those participating

Table IIIA-5 Distribution of Groups by Occupational Composition (Laborers and Service Personnel)

Discussion Week	Homogeneity with respect to percent in these occupations 0 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 99	%	total NO.
First	89	10	1	0	100	413
Second	88	10	2	0	100	388
Third	85	14	1	0	100	356
Fourth	85	14	1	0	100	348
Total No.	1308	178	15	4	100	1505

are not found in groups homogeneous on this variable. A relatively stable pattern is found when comparing the distributions of groups for the four periods.

A very small proportion of the discussion groups can be described as homogeneous with respect to the proportion of farmers (76-99 percent). As shown in Table IIIA-6 a majority or more than three-fourths of the groups are comprised

Table IIIA-6 Distributions of Groups by Occupational Composition (Farmers)

Discussion Week	Homogeneity with respect to percent in this occupation				
	Low			High	Total
	0 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 99	0/0 No.
First	78	17	3	2	100 413
Second	80	18	2	0	100 388
Third	75	20	3	2	100 356
Fourth	78	17	4	1	100 348
Total No.	1169	270	48	18	100 1505

of less than one-fourth farmers. It is apparent that this particular occupational category is found in groups with many non-farm occupations. Furthermore previous data shows that the proportion of total participants in this occupational category is slightly over 14 percent as compared with approximately 2.6 percent for the upstate population.[2]

7. Place of Residence

More groups are comprised mainly of persons living in population centers rather than farm or rural non-farm.[3] Since a larger proportion of participants come from the population centers, one would expect the groups to be comprised mainly of such residents. Furthermore it was shown in a previous report[4] that 41.3 percent of the participants report residing in population centers, 30.1 on

---

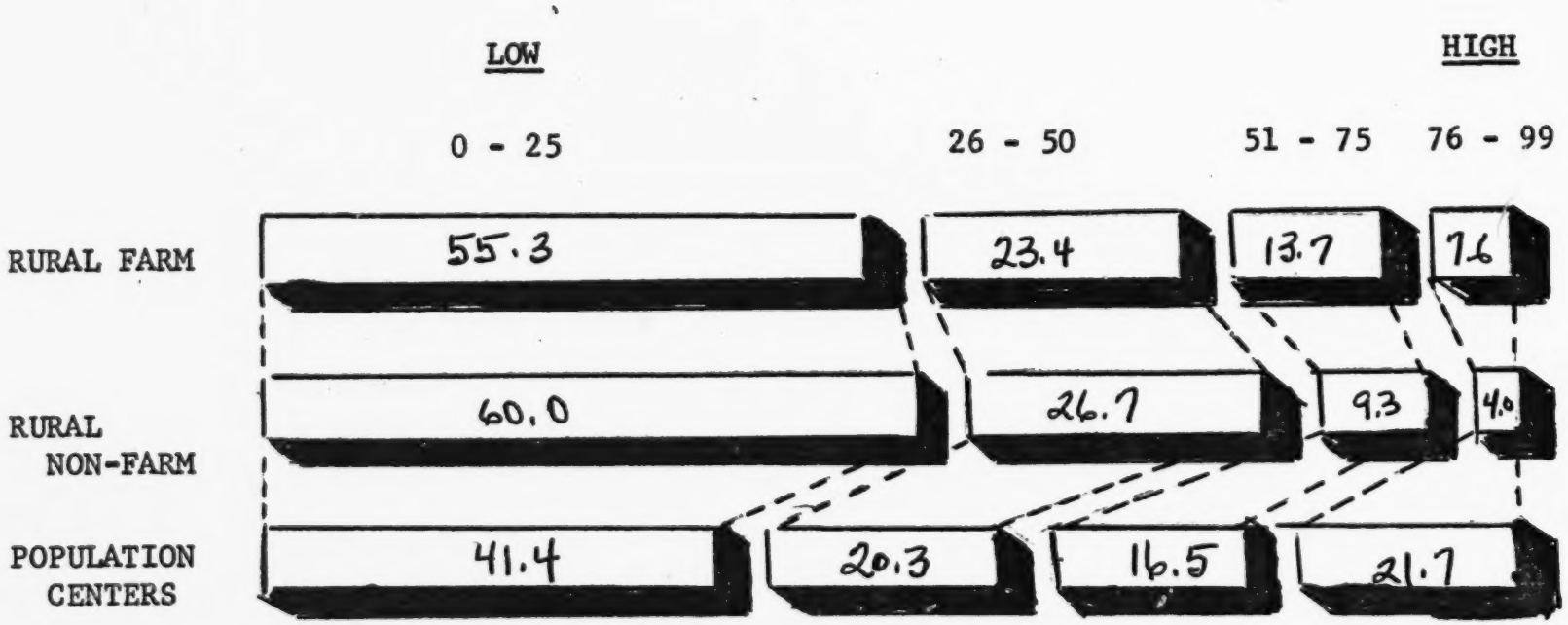
1 op. cit., p.4.

2 Business Fact Book, New York State Department of Commerce, Albany, N.Y.

3 Villages or cities less than 25,000, in other words, population centers.

4 Ibid., p.3.

FIGURE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF GROUPS HOMOGENEOUS WITH RESPECT TO RESIDENCE CATEGORIES



farms, and 26.0 percent in rural non-farm areas. These results offer some basis for the data reported in Figure 4. We find that a majority of the groups have less than a fourth of their members reporting their residencies as farm or rural non-farm. However a majority (76-99 percent) of the members in more than one-fifth of the discussion groups reside in population centers. A smaller percentage of the groups are found to be homogeneous (more than 3/4 of their members) with respect to farm and rural non-farm residence.

There is strong evidence from the data presented above that a great majority of the discussion groups were relatively heterogeneous with respect to certain compositional characteristics of the members, and the distribution of these characteristics remained relatively unchanged from week to week. More specifically one finds that a consistent 1/3 of the groups are comprised of 8-9 members; the modal categories have one community represented, are comprised of both men and women, professional occupations with some college and in the 36-55 age category. However groups whose members report their residence as population centers are more homogeneous on this compositional variable.

B. Group Stability: Variations in Group Size and Compositional Characteristics

1. Group Size

In the foregoing discussion we described the homogeneity of groups for each of the four discussion periods when compared on several membership composition characteristics. A measure of stability as a group property is to observe whether a group maintains its membership. Since membership gain or loss is of crucial importance to a discussion program, analysis was conducted to show changes in size of groups over the four week period.[1] An operational definition

---

1 The following operational steps were followed:
(1) Cards for the 603 groups which met during the first week were sorted according to size; (2) a second sorting was made, according to size in the second discussion meeting, for groups which fell in each size category. This enabled us to trace the groups which remained stable during the first two meetings and also helped to determine the number of groups in each size category that lost or gained members during the first two meetings; (3) for the groups which remained stable in the second meeting, a third sorting was made according to size during the third week to determine membership loss; (4) the procedure was repeated for the fourth week.

Table IIIB-1 Stability of Groups Over the Four Discussion Series

	Group Size	No. of stable groups in each size First	No. of stable groups Second	No. of stable groups Third	No. of stable groups Fourth	% stable
	1	0	0	0	0	
	2	1	1	1	1	
	3	2	0	0	0	
	4	24	13	10	8	33.3
Total =	5	29	15	9	5 25.7%	17.2
272	6	60	30	17	14 = 70	23.3
	7	65	37	33	21	32.3
	8	94	58	34	22	23.4
	9	106	60	36	21	19.8
	10	65	41	20	13 17.0%	20.0
Total =	11	50	27	12	7 = 47	14.0
276	12	35	9	7	4	11.4
	13	20	10	4	2	10.0
	14	13	4	0	0	0.0
	15	15	7	3	1	6.6
	16	10	1	0	0 1.9%	
Total =	17	4	1	0	0 = 1	
52	18	4	1	0	0	
	19	1	0	0	0	
	20	0				
	21	3				
	22	0				
	23	0				
	24	1				
	25	0				
	26	0				
	27	0				
	28	0				
	29	0				
	30	0				
	31	1				
	Total	603	315	186	119	19.7

of stable groups emphasizing membership maintenance would contend that the number of participants attending the 2nd, 3rd and 4th meetings be the same as the number at the first meeting, or the number of participants attending the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th meetings deviate by no more than plus or minus one from the number of participants in the first meeting. A group organized with ten members in the first week of discussion is considered stable therefore if the size for consecutive meetings remains ten or either increases to eleven or decreases to nine.

The 603 groups were classified in this manner as either stable or unstable. The total number of stable groups in the sample was 119 or 19 percent. Group size in the first discussion week ranged from two to thirty-one participants. None of the groups with more than 18 participants remained stable after the first week, similarly none with more than 16 participants remained stable after the second week. (See Table IIIB-1)

Examining the modal group size category for the first week, namely the 8-9 group size, one finds that in the second week 40 percent of the 201 original groups in this category show no size change, 32 percent and 28 percent of the groups gain and lose members respectively. The data are reported in Table IIIB-2. Similar data are reported for both the third and fourth meeting periods snd the results are given for each of the seven group size categories.

Upon careful reading of the table we conclude that group size 4-5; 6-7; and 8-9 display the greatest amount of stability and gain, whereas a higher proportion of the larger size groups 10-11; 12-13 and 14+ appear to be losing members.

Size of group in the first week is found to be significantly related to stability as presently defined and shown in Table IIIB-3. There is some suggestion that the larger size groups are less stable.

Table IIIB-2 Variations in Group Size for Each Meeting Period

Group Size	Percentage of Groups Showing no Change						Percentage of Groups Gaining Members						Percentage of Groups Losing Members					
	Second		Third		Fourth		Second		Third		Fourth		Second		Third		Fourth	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2 - 3	33	(3)	100	(1)	100	(1)	67	(3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 - 5	40	(53)	62	(21)	70	(13)	49	(53)	24	(21)	0	(13)	11	(53)	14	(21)	30	(13)
6 - 7	36	(125)	62	(45)	50	(28)	42	(125)	31	(45)	11	(28)	22	(125)	7	(45)	39	(38)
8 - 9	40	(201)	44	(79)	71	(35)	32	(201)	20	(79)	3	(35)	28	(201)	36	(79)	26	(35)
10 - 11	36	(119)	28	(43)	42	(12)	22	(119)	16	(43)	17	(12)	42	(119)	56	(43)	41	(12)
12 - 13	27	(55)	60	(15)	67	(9)	15	(55)	7	(15)	0	(9)	58	(55)	33	(15)	33	(9)
14+	52	(48)	32	(25)	50	(8)	0	(48)	0	(25)	0	(8)	48	(48)	68	(25)	50	(8)

Table IIIB-3 Group Stability by Size

	Group Size First Week						
Class	4 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 9	10-11	12-13	14+	Total
Stable	25	28	22	17	11	2	20
Unstable	75	72	78	83	89	98	80
Total No.	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

$P < .05$

2. Compositional Variables

Among the occupational variables only that of housewife is found to be significantly related to the present measure of stability. The results are reported in Table IIIB-4. One must be cautious when interpreting this factor. As pointed out earlier groups comprised solely of women members are groups that were previously organized.

Table IIIB-4 Group Stability by Percentage of Housewives

	Homogeneity of Groups with respect to percent housewives				
	Low			High	
Class	0-25	26-50	51-75	76-99	Total
Stable	17	20	15	34	20
Unstable	83	80	85	66	80
Total No.	100	100	100	100	100

$P < .05$

It may be argued of course that this rather crude measure of group stability should be weighted for group size. However, the low frequency of stable groups prevented this. We recognize that a relatively small group accepting some notion of a requisite number of roles, may be much more adversely affected by a loss of members than a larger group. Nevertheless, one may argue that

membership loss is inimical to the program regardless of the size of the group in which it occurs.

The differential rates of membership loss for groups of various sizes may also be the result of differences in means of social control. It would seem reasonable to suggest that greater anonymity prevails in a 14 person group than in one comprised of 4 or 5 members. How much and in what way these means of social control contribute to group stability we cannot say.

In summary the data reveal a pattern of association between group size and stability. We find that smaller groups display a higher amount of stability. The role of housewife is also associated with group stability. However this may be due primarily to a prior organizational history for some of these groups. A limited amount of evidence is found to show the effects of compositional characteristics on group stability. Many reasons may be advanced for this lack of positive results including the limited range of many of our compositional variables. There are for example very few groups that are homogeneous with respect to a given compositional variable. Another limitation undoubtedly derives from the crude measure of group stability. One should add that an entire class of data not available for the present analysis consists of member interactions within the groups and undoubtedly contributes to relative stability.

C. Group Survival and Compositional Characteristics

An originating question for the present analysis is: "Why do some discussion groups survive while others disband?" A partial answer to this question can be obtained by analyzing the member composition of discussion groups. Specifying the originating question we have: "Will groups that vary in member composition continue to meet throughout the four sessions?" The hypothesis is as follows: Greater homogeneity of group members on any one compositional characteristic is associated with a lower probability of group survival.

This hypothesis would appear to contradict a generally held proposition that shared group member interests through its effect on group cohesion leads to a greater persistence of the group over time. Usually discussions of the above proposition will include references to group size and the resultant mixed interests in the group. We contend that the homogeneity proposition more accurately pertains to small expressive types of voluntary groups whereas the relatively short lived instrumental and contrived types of groups, such as our unit of analysis, require some mixture of interests in order to survive.

Davis in his analysis of participants in the Great Books Program reports that the more members who are active in the discussion the better the retention of active and inactive members.[1] Indeed he concludes that role performance in the discussion sessions, regardless of the content of the roles, is the more important variable in retention. More directly related to our general hypothesis Davis concludes from his analysis of intellectual and ideological variables that "taken together these findings build a slight case for the diversity hypothesis."[2] In other words greater heterogeneity of member characteristics in a group is associated with fewer drop-outs, a hypothesis similar to our own. The rationale for this hypothesis rests primarily upon diversity of member interests and background. The latter yields a wider range of experiences that often serve to stimulate and sustain member interest thereby contributing to group survival.

---

1 Davis, James, op. cit., p. 136.

2 Ibid., p. 210.

Definitions of major concepts such as homogeneous, heterogeneous, survived, and disbanded are as follows: A homogeneous group with respect to any given compositional variable is one for which a majority of its members exhibit the characteristic. Survival refers to groups that met for all four sessions regardless of member gain or loss. A disbanded group, on the other hand, is one which failed to convene for all four discussion periods. The following analysis is presented to test the effect of certain compositional characteristics on group survival.

1. Number of Communities Represented

Table IIIC-1 shows that discussion groups are not limited to one community. Participants of slightly less than half of the groups in the program come from two or three communities. An examination of the percent distribution of disbanded and survived groups shows that the percent of the disbanded groups is not significantly related to the number of communities represented in the groups. It is of some significance for the program that a large percentage of groups are comprised of members from more than one community of residence.

Table IIIC-1 Group Survival by Community Representation of Members

Group Survival	Communities Represented: One %	One No.	Two %	Two No.	Three or more %	Three or more No.	Total %	Total No.
Disbanded	13	(47)	13	(22)	10	(7)	13	(76)
Survived	87	(317)	87	(149)	90	(61)	87	(527)
Total	100	(364)	100	(171)	100	(68)	100	(603)

$P > .05$

2. Men and Women

The percent of disbanded groups comprised of all women is comparatively higher than the percent of disbanded groups comprised of both men and women. Examining the category of survived groups we observe that the percentage of survived groups comprised solely of women is slightly

lower than that for survived groups comprised of men and women (Table IIIC-2). It is interesting to point out that this relationship also holds when examining groups comprised solely of men. Although the relationship between homogeneity on this variable and group survival is in the expected direction, it was not statistically significant.

Table IIIC-2 Group Survival by Percentage of Men and Women Members

Group Survival	All men		Percentage of Women Members: 1-25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99		all women		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	17	(11)	9	(5)	11	(32)	11	(13)	11	(2)	22	(13)	100	(76)
Survived	83	(53)	91	(50)	89	(254)	89	(109)	89	(16)	78	(45)	100	(527)
Total	100	(64)	100	(55)	100	(286)	100	(122)	100	(18)	100	(58)	100	(603)

$P > .05$

3. Levels of Education

The effect of three educational levels on survival is explored. These levels are: (1) high school or less, (2) some college or college graduate and (3) some post graduate. A negative relationship between groups whose members are disproportionately comprised of high school graduates and survival is not statistically significant. Furthermore groups for which a majority of the members have a college education do not display higher rates of survival than groups classed as having less than a majority.

Table IIIC-3 Group Survival by Educational Composition of Members (Post Graduate)

Class	Percentage of Members with more than college: 0 - 50 %	No.	51 - 99 %	No.	Total %	No.
Disbanded	12	(70)	24	(6)	13	(76)
Survived	88	(508)	76	(19)	87	(527)
Total	100	(578)	100	(25)	100	(603)

$P < .05$

Limited support is found for the homogeneity hypothesis when groups for which a majority of the members have a college education are compared with those having less than a majority on this variable (Table IIIC-3). The degree of homogeneity on the variable is negatively related to survival and a statistically significant relationship is found. The more educated participants, at least when organized in the same group, may have been less receptive to the program materials than groups comprised of members with less education.

4. Age Composition of Groups

Several studies have analyzed the relationship between a group member's age and his power or influence in the group situation but the present authors are not aware of any studies made on the relationship between age distribution and group survival.[1] In one study however the investigators report that for all male groups the oldest male members contributed most frequently to the groups while younger members (in their twenties) contributed least frequently.[2] We are concerned with the relationship between survival and age composition of discussion groups. Examining the disbanded and the survival categories in Table IIIC-4 it is clear that the proportion of the disbanded groups for which three-fourths to all of the members are young (35 years or less) is higher than the proportion of the disbanded groups that are less homogeneous on this characteristic. The results are statistically significant.

Table IIIC-4 Group Survival by "Young Age" Composition of Members

	Distribution of Groups by Age of Participants (35 years and younger)									
	0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	9	(35)	13	(21)	25	(12)	35	(8)	13	(76)
Survived	91	(337)	87	(139)	75	(36)	65	(15)	87	(527)
Total	100	(372)	100	(160)	100	(48)	100	(23)	100	(603)

$P < .01$

1 See for example Ziller, Robert C. and Exline, Ralph V., Some Consequences of Age Heterogeneity in Decision-Making Groups, Sociometry, 21: pp. 198-211, Sept. '58.

2 Ibid.

Groups with three-fourths to all of their members middle aged (36-55) show a higher survival (Table IIIC-5). Group homogeneity with respect to this variable means a lower probability of disbanding. The relationship is the opposite of that reported for the 35 and under age variable and is also significant.

The oldest age category (over 55) yields distributions of disbanded and survived groups that are not statistically significant. Further comment on these relationships will be made at the conclusion of this section.

Table IIIC-5 Group Survival by "Middle Age" Composition of Members

	Distribution of groups by age of participants (36-55 years old)									
Class	0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	25	(21)	15	(29)	9	(18)	6	(8)	12	(76)
Survived	75	(64)	85	(160)	91	(187)	94	(116)	88	(527)
Total	100	(85)	100	(189)	100	(205)	100	(124)	100	(603)

$P < .01$

5. Occupational Composition

Since managers, officials, and proprietors are the least represented category of participants in the discussion series, and also comprise a minority element in better than ninety percent of the groups, the homogeneity hypothesis cannot be tested on this variable.

Although professional, technical and kindred work occupational category for participants in the program, only five groups are found to have from three-fourths to all of their members in this category. A low frequency of cases necessitates combining the last two categories. Table IIIC-6 shows the results of this regrouping and its relationship to survival. The proportion of homogeneous groups surviving is significantly less than for groups that have a mixed composition on this occupational variable.

Table IIIC-6 Group Survival by Occupational Composition of Members

Class	Percentage Distribution of groups by Occupation (Professional, Technical and Kindred Workers)					
	0 - 50		51 - 99		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	12	(67)	36	(9)	13	(76)
Survived	88	(511)	64	(16)	87	(527)
Total	100	(578)	100	(25)	100	(603)

P $<$.05

Both the occupational categories of laborer and service personnel are least represented in the discussion series and their distribution over the groups yields an extremely small proportion (0.29 or less) of groups with three-fourths to all of their members in these occupations. Practically all groups (601 out of 603) had from zero to $\frac{1}{4}$ of their members reported as laborers while a relatively larger proportion (535 out of 603 groups) had from zero to $\frac{1}{4}$ of their members classed as service personnel.

6. Members' Place of Residence

Farm and population center residency show no significant relationship to group survival. In other words groups with varying proportions of members exhibiting these compositional characteristics show no significant differences in survival.

However when one examines the distribution of groups with respect to proportions of rural non-farm residents a consistent but not significant pattern is shown (Table IIIC-7). One might expect that groups disproportionately comprised of rural non-farm residents would show lower survival rates. This category of participants may have greater difficulty than residents of the centers in relating to the community problem oriented topics under discussion. The results are inconclusive and require further analysis.

Table IIIC-7 Group Survival by Members' Place of Residence

Class	Distribution of groups by rural non-farm residence								Total	
	0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99			
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	11	(41)	11	(17)	20	(12)	26	(6)	13	(76)
Survived	89	(324)	89	(137)	80	(49)	74	(17)	87	(527)
Total	100	(365)	100	(154)	100	(61)	100	(33)	100	(603)

P > .05

7. Group Size

Exploring the relationship of group size to survival requires that one identify certain correlates of size. It was mentioned in an earlier section that certain mechanisms of social control vary with respect to group size. However this may be more appropriate in predicting variations in number of members rather than the continuance or discontinuance of the group as a functioning entity. It is the latter area of interest that commands our attention in an analysis of group survival.

Given the nature of the dependent variable group survival, one would predict a positive relationship with group size. This relationship is based on the premise that a larger number of members will provide a greater potential base to draw upon for essential group roles. Furthermore there is a greater probability that larger groups will possess a more dynamic atmoshpere through representations of more diverse and varied interests. The results as shown in Table IIIC-8 offer a degree of confirmation for this hypothesis.

Table IIIC-8 Group Survival by Membership Size

Distribution of groups in different size categories

Class	4 - 5		6 - 7		8 - 9		10-11		12-13		14+		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Disbanded	28	(15)	17	(21)	11	(23)	7	(8)	7	(4)	7	(4)	13	(75)
Survived	72	(38)	83	(103)	89	(177)	93	(107)	93	(51)	93	(49)	87	(525)
Total	100	(53)	100	(124)	100	(200)	100	(115)	100	(55)	100	(53)	100	(600)

$P < .05$

The preceeding section was concerned with exploring the relationship between the amount of homogeneity discussion groups display on a variety of compositional variables and the survival of groups throughout the four periods. Six compositional characteristics were indexed to yield a total of fifteen variables. The analysis shows four of the fifteen variables to be significantly related to group survival and the results are summarized in the table provided below.

Compositional Variables and Group Survival

Variable	Relationship to Group Survival
1. Number of communities represented	not significant
2. Sex composition of Groups	not significant
3. Levels of Education of Groups	
a. High school or less	not significant
b. Some college & Graduates	not significant
c. Post Graduates	significant (negative)
4. Age Composition of Groups	
a. under 36	significant (negative)
b. 36-55	significant (positive)
c. 56 and over	not significant
5. Occupational Composition of Groups	
a. Managers, Officials, Proprietors	not significant
b. Professional, Technical, Kindred	significant (negative)
c. Laborers, Service Personnel	not significant
d. Housewives	not significant
6. Place of Residence	
a. Farm	not significant
b. Population center	not significant
c. Rural non-farm	not significant

The following compositional variables are found to be negatively related to group survival: the proportion of group members who have some post graduate

education; the proportion of group members who are under 36 years of age; and the proportion of group members who are professionals, technical or kindred workers. This complex of variables when found in dominant proportions within a given group serves to describe a class of groups that show lower rates of survival than those groups for which these compositional characteristics are less dominant. In the context of the present analysis they are supportive of the homogeneity hypothesis. One may conjecture that these young, highly educated professionals do not relate as well to the discussion topics or to the community context in which they are framed and/or discussed. We can only speculate as to the basic causes underlying the lower survival rates for groups having these characteristics. Prior studies of social action in community contexts and degrees of involvement in voluntary organizations have usually shown an older age group to be the relevant decision makers. Along this line of reasoning we find that groups whose members are disproportionately in the 36-56 age category display higher rates of survival.

IV. Group Composition and Member Attitudes

A. Community Growth

Analysis of participants' responses to two attitudinal items will serve to identify the effects of group homogeneity on certain key attitudes in the discussion series. The items chosen are reflective of two basic themes found throughout the series, namely community growth and interdependence.

The first attitudinal statement dealt with the effect of community growth on individual happiness and was worded as follows: "Once a community ceases to grow it ceases to be a place where people can live happily". Another statement dealt with the dependency of the individual's future on that of the community. We are interested in exploring how groups that differ on certain compositional variables respond to these two statements.

With respect to the first statement it is assumed that some group compositional characteristics will tend to be more closely identified with the population centers than others. Groups that are relatively homogeneous on these variables therefore will tend to have a higher percentage of agreement on the first statement than those that are less homogeneous. Since the concept of community growth is likely to be identified with economic growth and development one would expect the latter to be more visible to a person employed in a center of population than to a farmer. Furthermore farmers as an occupational category are likely to view their economic future as more closely tied to national and international markets. They are also known to be somewhat ambivalent in their attitudes toward community development recognizing that it may compete for land and related resources required for their farm operations. Generalizing from this line of reasoning one would expect that individuals with occupations more closely identified with the population center will tend to agree with the statement on community growth more than those employed outside the center.

Farm residency is found to be significantly related to respondents' attitudes toward community growth. Table IVA-1 shows that in general the larger the proportion of group members who reside on farms, the higher the proportion of groups who disagree with the statement. This relationship is consistent with our hypothesis since farm residents are less concerned with the affairs of the

Table IVA-1 Attitude Toward Community Growth by Farm Residence

Percent of group members who disagree	Group Homogeneity with respect to percent and number of members residing on farms: (low) 0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99 (high)		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None disagree	35	10	13	9	6	8	6	13	60	10
1 - 25	95	28	25	18	10	13	5	10	135	22
26 - 50	108	32	47	34	33	42	12	25	200	33
51 - 75	65	19	30	23	16	20	11	23	122	20
76 - 99	36	11	22	16	14	18	14	29	86	15
Total	339	100	137	100	79	100	48	100	603	100

$P < .01$

Table IVA-2 Attitude Toward Community Growth by Residence in Population Centers

Percent of members who disagree	Group Homogeneity with respect to percent and number of members who reside in population centers									
	(low) 0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99 (high)		Total	
	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0
none disagree	23	9	10	9	10	9	17	13	60	10
1 - 25	44	18	26	22	32	30	33	25	135	22
26 - 50	76	31	46	39	27	25	51	39	200	33
51 - 75	59	24	17	15	27	25	19	14	122	20
76 - 99	45	18	18	15	11	11	12	9	86	15
Total	247	100	117	100	107	100	132	100	603	100

$P < .05$

Table IVB-1 High School Education and Community Dependency

percent of members who disagree	Homogeneity with respect to percent and number of members having high school education or less: (low)0 - 25 No.	0/0	26 - 50 No.	0/0	51 - 75 No.	0/0	76 - 99(high) No.	0/0	Total No.	0/0
None disagree	9	4	6	3	4	3	8	16	27	5
1 - 25	23	11	36	17	25	20	9	18	93	15
26 - 50	81	37	73	34	32	34	10	20	206	34
51 - 75	73	34	73	34	35	28	14	29	195	32
76 - 99	31	14	25	12	18	15	8	17	82	14
Total	217	100	213	100	114	100	39	100	603	100

$P < .01$

center such as community economic growth than their urban counterparts.

Conversely groups with a high proportion of members from population centers are expected to show a high degree of agreement with the statement. Confirmation appears in Table IVA-2 where for relatively homogeneous groups a higher proportion agreed with the statement. The relationship between population center residence and favorable attitude toward community growth is significant.

B. Individualism

The second attitudinal item: "An individual's future is independent of the future of the community" appears to measure individualism. It is assumed that the relatively high social and geographic mobility characteristic of American society will lessen an individual's perceived dependency upon his local community. One would also hypothesize that certain variables such as level of education, type of occupation and place of residence will influence mobility and therefore individualism. Groups disproportionately comprised of these compositional characteristics will also be expected to show a higher proportion of their members disagreeing with the attitude statement. For example, we predict that group members with high school education or less will have relatively low mobility potential and therefore when they comprise a majority of any given group a high percentage of responses disagreeing with the statement will be found. Examining the percentage of groups that have a majority of members (75-99 percent) who disagree with the statement, one finds support for the hypothesis. The results are reported in Table IVB-1.

Analyzing the effect of percentage of members with more than a college education on individualism one finds more agreement with the statement for groups disproportionately comprised of members with more than 4 years of college. The results are significant as shown in Table IVB-2.

Farming as an occupation and population center residency when analyzed as compositional variables have a negative relationship with individualistic attitudes. Agreement on the item among the groups whose membership is made up of more than half farmers tend to be higher than the proportion disagreeing (Table IVB-3).

Groups whose members are predominantly population center residents do not show a high percentage agreement on the items as shown in Table IVB-4. The relationship is negative as shown by the high proportion of population center residents in groups giving negative responses to the statement. The results are statistically significant.and opposite to that predicted earlier. However the small number of groups in some of the cells suggests qualified interpretation.

Table IVB-2 Post Graduate Education and Community Dependency

Percent of members disagreeing	Group Homogeneity with respect to percent and no. of post graduates					
	0 - 50		51 - 99		Total	
	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.
None	6	25	8	2	5	27
1 - 25	16	93	0	0	15	93
26 - 50	33	193	52	13	34	206
51 - 75	32	187	32	8	32	195
76 - 99	13	80	8	2	14	82
Total	100	578	100	25	100	603

$P < .01$

Table IVB-3 Farming Occupation and Community Dependency

Percent of members disagreeing	Group Homogeneity with respect to percent farmers					
	0 - 50		51 - 99		Total	
	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.
None	7	24	14	3	5	27
1 - 25	15	90	14	3	16	93
26 - 50	34	202	19	4	34	206
51 - 75	31	185	48	10	32	195
76 - 99	13	81	5	1	13	82
Total	100	582	100	21	100	603

$P < .01$

Table IVB-4 Population Center Residency and Community Dependency

Percent of Members who Disagree	Groups Homogeneity with respect to percent and number of members residing in Population Centers									
	0 - 25		26 - 50		51 - 75		76 - 99		Total	
	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0	No.	0/0
None	17	7	2	2	4	4	4	3	27	5
1 - 25	53	22	14	12	11	10	15	11	93	15
26 - 50	77	31	43	37	36	34	50	38	206	34
51 - 75	80	32	34	29	44	41	37	28	195	32
76 - 99	20	8	24	20	12	11	26	20	82	14
Total	247	100	117	100	107	100	132	100	603	100

P < .05

Epilogue

This study brings into view some observations beyond stated purposes that appear to have implications for public affairs education programs.

1. Relationship between Sponsorship and Participants

The program attracted a very small percentage of persons in middle and larger sized cities, wherein the vast majority of the population reside and where the public issues treated in the discussion series are of unquestionable importance. One reason for this, and perhaps the major one, is that the sponsoring agency lacked the ability or interest to organize discussion groups in cities. One assumes that the program had relevance for both city and country residents. An extension or broadening of the range of participants would probably require the sponsoring agency to establish laison with urban located extension type programs. Coalitions of this kind would lead to the development of materials and methods designed to involve citizens from cities, the suburbs and the countryside. Furthermore one would also advocate expanding the use of radio and television presentations combined with feedbacks from local discussion groups.

2. Integration of Discussion Content

The first three pamphlets in the series concentrated on domestic issues while the fourth one treated international problems. There are important relationships between these two areas of concern, some of which are brought out in the pamphlets. However, this rather sudden shift from local to international affairs had an adverse affect on group survival and provides limited support for an old adage about the relationship between intensity of interest and identification with the topic.

3. Discussion and Action

Unquestionably the most common remark made by participants in the series concerned the means to implement the ideas discussed within the groups. It would appear that additional information is required as to the legitimate means of initiating social action in a democracy.

APPENDIX A

OPERATION ADVANCE

OPINIONNAIRE for Discussion Sheet 1

COMMUNITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

These questions will help you clarify your opinions on some issues raised in this Discussion Sheet.

Your opinions, along with many others, are important to leaders in developing proposals for action on major public issues.

	Full agreement	Qualified agreement	Disagree
1. Any attempt by neighboring communities to solve common problems through joint action will eventually weaken their power to meet local needs.	_____	_____	_____
2. Once a community ceases to grow it ceases to be a place where people can live happily.	_____	_____	_____
3. An individual need feel no responsibility to help in solving community problems that involve matters too technical for him.	_____	_____	_____
4. The true boundaries of a "community" are wider than the boundaries of the basic units of local government.	_____	_____	_____
5. Children should be prepared for a way of life different from that of their parents.	_____	_____	_____
6. An individual's future is independent of the future of the community.	_____	_____	_____
7. Rural attitudes and ways of doing things can adapt themselves to change as easily as those of people who come from the cities.	_____	_____	_____
8. A community's resources for development are limited to what can be mobilized within the locality.	_____	_____	_____
9. A community divided is no community and will fall behind in its growth.	_____	_____	_____
10. If someone doesn't like the way things are in a community his best bet is to move away.	_____	_____	_____

It would be helpful to the Cooperative Extension Service to have information about the people who fill out these OPINIONNAIRES. Please complete the following.

1. County_____ 2. Community _____
3. I am: male_____ female_____
4. Years in school: 8 or less, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 or more
5. Age: Under 25____ 26-35____ 36-45____
   46-55_____ 56-65____ Over 65____
6. My major occupation _____
7. I live: a. on a farm _____
   b. in the country but not on a farm _____
   c. in a town or city of less than 25,000 _____
   d. in a place of more than 25,000 people _____
8. I was: a group member____ a discussion leader _____

Make a record of your opinions on last page of Discussion Sheet. FORWARD THIS OPINIONNAIRE to the County Extension office immediately after the discussion.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. A. A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, N. Y.

OPERATION ADVANCE

OPINIONNAIRE for Discussion Sheet 2

EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE

These questions will help you clarify your opinions on some issues raised in this Discussion Sheet.

Your opinions, along with many others, are important to leaders in developing proposals for action on major public issues.

	Full agreement	Qualified agreement	Disagree
1. A community's growth potential is dependent upon its educational system	_____	_____	_____
2. Community residents are not well informed about educational affairs	_____	_____	_____
3. School district organization has been keeping pace with changes in the community	_____	_____	_____
4. The State should lead in setting educational policies	_____	_____	_____
5. Most attention should be paid to gifted students	_____	_____	_____
6. Predictions of future enrollments are underestimates	_____	_____	_____
7. There is a need for more vocational training	_____	_____	_____
8. Teacher pay scales will have to rise to insure quality instruction	_____	_____	_____
9. There is a lack of community consensus on educational goals	_____	_____	_____
10. There is a need for more varied educational opportunities beyond high school	_____	_____	_____

It would be helpful to the Cooperative Extension Service to have information about the people who fill out these OPINIONNAIRES. Please complete the following.

1. County _____ 2. Community _____
3. I am: male _____ female _____
4. Years in school: 8 or less, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 or more
5. Age: Under 25 ____ 26-35 ____ 36-45 ____
   46-55 ____ 56-65 ____ Over 65 ____
6. My major occupation _____
7. I live: a. on a farm _____
   b. in the country but not on a farm _____
   c. in a town or city of less than 25,000 _____
   d. in a place of more than 25,000 people _____
8. I was: a group member ____ a discussion leader _____

Make a record of your opinions on last page of Discussion Sheet. FORWARD THIS OPINIONNAIRE to the County Extension office immediately after the discussion.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. A. A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, N. Y.

OCTOBER, 1963, 150M

OPERATION ADVANCE

OPINIONNAIRE for Discussion Sheet 3

RESOURCES--LAND, WATER AND PEOPLE

These questions will help you clarify your opinions on some issues raised in this Discussion Sheet.

Your opinions, along with many others, are important to leaders in developing proposals for action on major public issues.

	Full agreement	Qualified agreement	Disagree
1. New knowledge can sharply increase the "productivity" of our resources by showing new ways to use them.			
2. People in rural communities today need to shift their attention from farming to a wide variety of new activities and ideas.			
3. Human action is as important as the action of natural forces in shaping the environment.			
4. Inasmuch as we can regulate highway use for community benefit, we can regulate water and land use for community benefit.			
5. The State government should take a stronger hand in controlling the use of retired farm land.			
6. Most areas that are unsuited to commercial farming will not be suited to residential or recreational use either.			
7. A lack of road, school, police, fire, electricity and telephone services can retard the development of other uses for vacant farm land.			
8. City people have a right to use rural areas for recreation purposes.			
9. Available services for meeting the needs of rural resource development on private lands are being under-utilized.			
10. It is not likely that farm and non-farm people will work together in meeting community problems.			

It would be helpful to the Cooperative Extension Service to have information about the people who fill out these OPINIONNAIRES. Please complete the following.

1. County _____ 2. Community _____
3. I am: male _____ female _____
4. Years in school: 8 or less, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 or more
5. Age: Under 25 ____ 26-35 ____ 36-45 ____
   46-55 ____ 56-65 ____ Over 65 ____
6. My major occupation _____
7. I live: a. on a farm _____
   b. in the country but not on a farm _____
   c. in a town or city of less than 25,000 _____
   d. in a place of more than 25,000 people _____
8. I was: a group member ____ a discussion leader _____

Make a record of your opinions on last page of Discussion Sheet. FORWARD THIS OPINIONNAIRE to the County Extension office immediately after the discussion.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. A. A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, N. Y.

OCTOBER, 1963, 150M

OPERATION ADVANCE

-44-

OPINIONNAIRE for Discussion Sheet 4

AMIDST WORLD TENSIONS

These questions will help you clarify your opinions on some issues raised in this Discussion Sheet.

Your opinions, along with many others, are important to leaders in developing proposals for action on major public issues.

	Full agreement	Qualified agreement	Disagree
1. The best way to deal with communists is to get tough and stay tough.			
2. Development of emerging nations is slowed down by democratic forms of government.			
3. Hate, fear and ignorance steel the emotions but dull the mind.			
4. It is in our own best interest to aid the growth of emerging nations which are neutral in the Cold War.			
5. Emerging nations need our material assistance more than our ideas.			
6. Specialization and trade makes it possible for each producer to be more productive.			
7. Our foreign policy should attempt to draw communist satellite nations away from dependence on the Soviet Union or Red China.			
8. It was unwise to aid the reconstruction of Europe if the Common Market can now compete successfully with our own producers.			
9. Respect, understanding and enlightened self-interest are the keystones of a peaceful and orderly world.			
10. All foreign aid should be channelled through the United Nations			

It would be helpful to the Cooperative Extension Service to have information about the people who fill out these OPINIONNAIRES. Please complete the following.

1. County_____ 2. Community _____
3. I am: male_____ female _____
4. Years in school: 8 or less, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 or more
5. Age: Under 25____ 26-35____ 36-45 ____
   46-55 _____ 56-65____ Over 65 ____
6. My major occupation _____
7. I live: a. on a farm _____
   b. in the country but not on a farm _____
   c. in a town or city of less than 25,000 _____
   d. in a place of more than 25,000 people _____
8. I was: a group member___ a discussion leader _____
9. I participated in discussions 1 _ 2 _ 3 _ 4 _

Make a record of your opinions on last page of Discussion Sheet. FORWARD THIS OPINIONNAIRE to the County Extension office immediately after the discussion.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. A. A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, N. Y.

OCTOBER, 1963, 150M

APPENDIX B

Any reporting of information on this sheet must be accompanied by the following statement: THESE DATA WERE OBTAINED FROM PARTICIPANTS IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION PROGRAM (OPERATION ADVANCE) WHO VOLUNTARILY COMPLETED OPINIONNAIRES. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT A SAMPLING OF PUBLIC OPINION AMONG RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK STATE OR ANY COUNTY THEREIN.

OPINIONNAIRE SUMMARY FROM DISCUSSION SHEET NO. 1 - COMMUNITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, OPERATION ADVANCE FEBRUARY 1964

Opinion Statements:	____County % Distribution of Responses by ____ Participants				New York State, % Distribution of Responses by 5140 Participants			
	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis-Agree.	No Answer	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis-agree	No Answer
1. Any attempt by neighboring communities to solve common problems through joint action will eventually weaken their power to meet local needs.	___	___	___	___	7.4	21.7	69.6	1.3
2. Once a community ceases to grow it ceases to be a place where people can live happily.	___	___	___	___	22.9	31.9	44.3	0.9
3. An individual need feel no responsibility to help in solving problems that involve matters too technical for him.	___	___	___	___	5.7	12.0	81.1	1.2
4. The true boundaries of a "community" are wider than the boundaries of the basic units of local government.	___	___	___	___	83.6	10.6	4.0	1.8
5. Children should be prepared for a way of life different from that of their parents.	___	___	___	___	52.0	37.5	8.7	1.6
6. An individual's future is independent of the future of the community.	___	___	___	___	16.1	31.9	50.2	1.8
7. Rural attitudes and way of doing things can adapt themselves to change as easily as those of people who come from cities.	___	___	___	___	43.0	30.8	24.5	1.7
8. A community's resources for development are limited to what can be mobilized within the locality.	___	___	___	___	14.7	22.6	60.3	2.4
9. A community devided is no community and will fall behind in its growth.	___	___	___	___	54.9	26.5	17.0	1.6
10. If someone doesn't like the way things are in a community his best bet is to move away.	___	___	___	___	5.3	13.1	80.4	1.2

Questions, comments or suggestions about OPERATION ADVANCE are most welcome. Please contact your County Extension Agents.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8, June 30, 1914. A.A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, New York.

Any reporting of information on this sheet must be accompanied by the following statement: THESE DATA WERE OBTAINED FROM PARTICIPANTS IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (OPERATION ADVANCE) WHO VOLUNTARILY COMPLETED OPINIONNAIRES. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT A SAMPLING OF PUBLIC OPINION AMONG RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK STATE OR ANY COUNTY THEREIN.

OPINIONNARIE SUMMARY FROM DISCUSSION SHEET NO. 2 - EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE, OPERATION ADVANCE, FEBRUARY 1964

Opinion Statements:	____ County. % Distribution of Responses by ____ Participants				New York State % Distribution of Responses by 5730 Participants			
	Full agree.	Qualif. agree.	Dis-agree.	No Answer	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis-agree.	No Answer
1. A community's growth potential is dependent upon its educational system.	___	___	___	___	56.8	38.1	4.6	0.5
2. Community residents are not well informed about educational affairs.	___	___	___	___	44.2	42.6	12.3	0.9
3. School district organization has been keeping pace with changes in the community.	___	___	___	___	40.5	39.7	17.7	2.1
4. The State should lead in setting educational policies.	___	___	___	___	24.3	42.5	30.9	2.3
5. Most attention should be paid to gifted students. . .	___	___	___	___	5.8	24.7	67.2	2.3
6. Predictions of future enrollments are underestimates.	___	___	___	___	26.8	38.9	25.9	8.4
7. There is a need for more vocational training.	___	___	___	___	82.7	12.3	3.2	1.8
8. Teacher pay scales will have to rise to insure quality instruction.	___	___	___	___	38.1	40.0	20.0	1.9
9. There is a lack of community consensus on educational goals.	___	___	___	___	52.6	35.8	8.7	2.9
10. There is a need for more varied educational opportunities beyond high school.	___	___	___	___	75.5	16.5	7.1	0.9

Questions, comments or suggestions about OPERATION ADVANCE are most welcome. Please contact your County Extension Agent.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8, June 30, 1914. A.A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, New York.

Any reporting of information on this sheet must be accompanied by the following statement: THESE DATA WERE OBTAINED FROM PARTICIPANTS IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (OPERATION ADVANCE) WHO VOLUNTARILY COMPLETED OPINIONNIARES. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT A SAMPLING OF PUBLIC OPINION AMONG RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK STATE OR ANY COUNTY THEREIN.

OPINIONNAIRE SUMMARY FROM DISCUSSION SHEET NO. 3 - RESOURCES -- LAND, WATER AND PEOPLE, OPERATION ADVANCE
FEBRUARY 1964

Opinion Statements:	____ County. % Distribution of Responses by Participants				New York State. % Distribution of Responses by 4952 Participants			
	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis-agree.	No Answer	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis-agree.	No Answer
1. New knowledge can sharply increase the "productivity" of our resources by showing new ways to use them....	___	___	___	___	86.3	12.7	0.5	0.5
2. People in rural communities today need to shift their attention from farming to a wide variety of new activities and ideas.	___	___	___	___	42.2	46.6	10.4	0.8
3. Human action is as important as the action of natural forces in shaping the environment.	___	___	___	___	82.6	15.1	1.5	0.8
4. Inasmuch as we can regulate highway use for community benefit, we can regulate water and land use for community benefit.	___	___	___	___	53.6	35.9	9.0	1.5
5. The State government should take a stronger hand in controlling the use of retired farm land.	___	___	___	___	13.0	37.5	48.1	1.4
6. Most areas that are unsuited to commercial farming will not be suited to residential or recreational use either.	___	___	___	___	5.0	13.9	79.8	1.3
7. A lack of road, school, police, fire, electricity and telephone services can retard the development of other uses for vacant farm land.	___	___	___	___	63.4	26.4	9.2	1.0
8. City people have a right to use rural areas for recreation purposes.	___	___	___	___	21.6	44.8	31.7	1.9
9. Available service for meeting the needs of rural resource development on private lands are being under-utilized.	___	___	___	___	54.6	35.9	6.6	2.9
10. It is not likely that farm and non-farm people will work together in meeting community problems.. . . .	___	___	___	___	8.6	25.1	65.5	0.8

(48)

Questions, comments or suggestions about OPERATION ADVANCE are most welcome. Please contact your County Extension Agents.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of acts of Congress,

2

Any reporting of information on this sheet must be accompanied by the following statement: THESE DATA WERE OBTAINED FROM PARTICIPANTS IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (OPERATION ADVANCE) WHO VOLUNTARILY COMPLETED OPINIONNAIRES. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT A SAMPLING OF PUBLIC OPINION AMONG RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK STATE OR ANY COUNTY THEREIN.

OPINIONNAIRE SUMMARY FROM DISCUSSION SHEET NO. 4 - AMIDST WORLD TENSIONS, OPERATION ADVANCE, FEBRUARY 1964

Opinion Statements:	____ County. % Distribution of Responses by ____ Participants				New York State. % Distribution of Responses by 4505 Participants			
	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis- Agree.	No. Answer	Full Agree.	Qualif. Agree.	Dis- Agree.	No Answer
1. The best way to deal with communists is to get tough and stay tough.	___	___	___	___	49.3	39.1	10.4	1.2
2. Development of emerging nations is slowed down by democratic forms of government.	___	___	___	___	19.8	43.9	34.0	2.3
3. Hate, fear and ignorance steel the emotions but dull the mind.	___	___	___	___	78.6	14.4	5.6	1.4
4. It is in our own best interest to aid the growth of emerging nations which are neutral in the Cold War. .	___	___	___	___	59.2	33.8	5.3	1.7
5. Emerging nations need our material assistance more than our ideas.	___	___	___	___	15.5	42.2	40.1	2.2
6. Specialization and trade makes it possible for each producer to be more productive.	___	___	___	___	67.8	25.5	4.4	2.3
7. Our foreign policy should attempt to draw communist satellite nations away from dependence on the Soviet Union or Red China.	___	___	___	___	58.5	29.4	9.8	2.3
8. It was unwise to aid the reconstruction of Europe if The Common Market can now compete successfully with our own producers.	___	___	___	___	11.2	24.7	61.5	2.6
9. Respect, understanding and enlightened self-interest are the keystones of a peaceful and orderly world. ..	___	___	___	___	79.3	16.8	2.3	1.6
10. All foreign aid should be channelled through the United Nations.	___	___	___	___	13.0	24.1	61.4	1.5

Questions, comments or suggestions about OPERATION ADVANCE are most welcome. Please contact your County Extension Agents.

Cooperative Extension Service, New York Stage Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U.D. Department of Agriculture cooperating. In furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8, June 30, 1914. A.A. Johnson, Director of Extension, Ithaca, New York.

ERIC Clearinghouse
SEP 10 1969
on Adult Education